

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

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**1. Name of Property**

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Historic name Southern Stove Works

other names/site number VDHR # 127-6145

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**2. Location**

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street & number 1215 Hermitage Road not for publication  
city or town Richmond vicinity  
state Virginia code VA county Independent City code 760 Zip 23220

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**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

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As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination      request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant      nationally      statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official Date

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property      meets      does not meet the National Register criteria. (      See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

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I, hereby certify that this property is:      other (explain):     

     entered in the National Register

     See continuation sheet.

     determined eligible for the

National Register

     See continuation sheet.

     determined not eligible for the National Register

     removed from the National Register

Signature of Keeper \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceSouthern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**5. Classification****Ownership of Property** (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property** (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>5</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A**6. Function or Use****Historic Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)Cat: Industry/Processing/Extraction Sub: manufacturing facility

<u>Industry/Processing/Extraction</u>	<u>industrial storage</u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>

**Current Functions** (Enter categories from instructions)Cat: Domestic Sub: multiple dwelling (work in progress)

<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceSouthern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification** (Enter categories from instructions)Other  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)foundation Concrete  
roof Other  
walls Brick  
\_\_\_\_\_  
other Concrete  
\_\_\_\_\_**Narrative Description** (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Applicable National Register Criteria** (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ X A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ X C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations** (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

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**Areas of Significance** (Enter categories from instructions)Industry  
Architecture**Period of Significance** 1902 - 1950

U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Significant Dates Ca. 1902  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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### 9. Major Bibliographical References

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#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS)

\_\_\_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

\_\_\_ previously listed in the National Register

\_\_\_ previously determined eligible by the National Register

\_\_\_ designated a National Historic Landmark

\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary Location of Additional Data

X State Historic Preservation Office

\_\_\_ Other State agency

\_\_\_ Federal agency

\_\_\_ Local government

\_\_\_ University

\_\_\_ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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### 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property 6.37

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing    Zone Easting Northing

1    \_\_\_\_\_    2    \_\_\_\_\_

3    \_\_\_\_\_    4    \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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U. S. Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceSouthern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**11. Form Prepared By**name/title: Stephen Leibovic, managerOrganization: Aneka Guna, L.L.C. date October 27, 2004street & number: 3 Summit Drive telephone (804)673-4565city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23229**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets****Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Aneka Guna L.L.C.street & number 3 Summit Drive telephone (804)673-4565city or town Richmond state VA zip code 23229**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 7 Page 1

Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA

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**Description:**

**Summary**

In a period of flourishing industry in Richmond, Southern Stove Works, one of Richmond's two major stove manufacturing plants, built a new foundry and warehouse at the corner of Hermitage and Leigh in the early 1900's. Moving in during 1902, this was one of the most modern stove manufacturing plants in the country. Equipment was transported from New York and elsewhere, and the company grew quickly. Between 1905 and 1920, the foundry building and the warehouse building were expanded, and two additional buildings were constructed on site. All one story buildings in the complex are of red brick, with a moderate amount of architectural elaboration in the exterior design. The interiors have industrial framing with open utilitarian spaces. The complex is characteristic of its period, and in spite of modifications, primarily replacement of some of the windows, it continues to express its historic function.

**Inventory:**

The Southern Stove Works site currently includes 4 buildings, labeled A-D on the attached plat, and a water tower. All are contributing resources. All of the buildings are of brick and feature recessed panels set back by two to three brick courses from the building faces giving a sense of brick pilasters supporting the overlying structure and providing visual definition for pairs of windows, except on Building D where the north, south and east faces are windowless.

**Building A:** Constructed prior to 1921, late in the period of occupancy by Southern Stove Works. One-story, brick building built in two phases; metal interior framing; wood plank roof covered by metal and asphalt, six-over-six, double-hung sash have been replaced.

**Building B:** Built in two phases; the western end was built prior to occupancy of the site by Southern Stove Works, and the eastern end was added sometime between 1905 and 1920. Three-story, seven-course American bond brick building with heavy timber structural support; mostly flat low-pitched roof with stepped parapet at east and west ends of building and light monitors on roof ridge; six-over-six double-hung sash; north façade shows painted advertising.

**Building C:** Original Foundry Building. Constructed in two phases – eastern end prior to 1902 and western end between 1905 and 1920. One-story, brick building with steel interior framing; light monitors on roof ridge; tall three-light windows are replacements and original configuration is unknown. Typical of metal foundry buildings of this time.

**Building D:** Constructed between 1905 and 1920. One-story seven-course American bond brick

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Section   7   Page   2**

building; windowless on north, east and south walls; recessed brick panels; sloped roof covered with polymer coating.

**Setting:**

The Southern Stove Works property site is bordered on the west by Hermitage Road, on the North by the CSX Railroad line, to the East by Middlesex Road and to the south by Leigh Street. Southern Stove Works moved into their newly built facility in 1902. Evidence of new construction at the site comes from "The City on the James"<sup>1</sup>, 1902, in which the Southern Stove Works is described: "For many years (Richmond) has been one of the most important Stove Making centers in the southern country both for cast and sheet wares, and this importance has been augmented to a considerable degree in the past year by a new plant put up by one of the two principal firms established here." From the 1905 Sanborn map, the site consisted of a foundry in the eastern half of building C, warehouse storage in the western half of building B, and metal storage in the eastern half of building B. Neither buildings A or D had yet been built. A building was present between the future site of building A and building B, containing a nickel plating facility and machine rooms. A small building was present just south of the rail line between the building B and A sites; this building housed Japanning ovens.

Topography of the site is mostly flat presently, except for a steep slope downward to the north as one approaches the railroad line on the Northern border. Hermitage Road and Leigh Streets were at a lower level in the early 1900's however as seen in 1928 photographs of Leigh St.<sup>2</sup>

Evidence suggests that building A was built prior to 1921. It is shown on the 1921 Sanborn map, and photographs from the Virginia Historical Society seem to show operations of the Southern Stove Works in building A<sup>3</sup>. If so, it apparently was used for assembly and packing of stoves. The building was sandwiched between the railroad spur just south of building B, and the railroad line near the southern border of the property. Irregular in shape, its construction completed a compact collection of buildings.

Building A's west façade was rebuilt in the 1960's when Hermitage Road was widened, as the western extent of the building interfered with the widening project. The west facade is brick veneer, running brick courses on Concrete Masonry Units. The south façade, exposed to Leigh St. had red brick laid in seven-course American Bond, two bricks thick. The façade is divided into recessed panels; the panels are recessed from the wall face. In each panel are two windows. This recessed panel motif is repeated on all one story façades in the complex, unifying their architectural details. The north façade of building A demonstrates that it was constructed in two phases. The western two-thirds is the oldest. A concrete foundation was poured in a trench and the top of the foundation was at grade. The eastern one third has a board-formed foundation, more visible as the site slopes downhill to the east, with the top of the foundation above grade.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Section   7   Page   3**

The interior of building A has an interesting structural system. Large metal I-beams span the roof line, braced to W-columns with angle iron supports at 45 degrees to the W columns. The north and south walls have a metal web framework near the ceiling. The structure suggests that iron was erected first, and brick was in-filled between iron structural supports. Wood framing spans the metal structure, and a wood plank roof is covered by metal and asphalt. Building A's windows were originally double-hung wood sash with six-over-six configuration. Most have been replaced. Others are in disrepair. Sills are wood and are largely rotted.

Building B was constructed as a three-story brick warehouse with heavy timber structural support for floors and a mostly flat, slightly pitched roof. Three light monitors were constructed on the roof; they remain but are metal covered. A stepped parapet wall marks the west and the east ends of the building. Loading dock doors on the west end and on the south face of the western extension allowed material handling in and out of the building. The railroad spur came directly alongside the southern face of the warehouse building. Masonry is in seven course American Bond pattern. Symmetrically placed windows feature double-hung wood sash with six-over-six configuration and wood muntins, and an arched brick lintel spanning the top of the window opening. Most of the original windows have been replaced over the years. A loading dock door on the north elevation has been bricked in with dissimilar brick. Several metal tie rods with exposed thread and nuts are evident on the wall. The north façade shows painted advertising (Southern Stove); window sills are chisel cut limestone. Distinctive ruts in the masonry on the south face are believed to be the result of the trundling of hogsheads (tobacco containers) while the facility was used by J.P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Co.<sup>4</sup> An elevator shaft in the central portion of the building remains today. The flooring is made of wide planks on heavy timber structural support, though much of it has been patched over the years with plywood or steel plate. The eastern half of the original footprint of building B was of similar construction, and built at the same time. The south face of building B has a large painted sign announcing the Works and the principal product line of Tip Top Stoves. Faded remnants of this sign remain today. Windows throughout are six-over-six double-hung sash, though many have been replaced over the years, and others are in disrepair. Arched brick lintels define the upper border of the windows, whose spacing is consistent with the heavy timber frame structure.

Sometime between 1905 and 1920, building B was extended eastward. As the property slopes downhill gently from west to east, the addition to building B had four floors, the extra floor being at and slightly below grade. It was built while still occupied by Southern Stove Works, as the faded painted letters of Southern Stove and Tip Top Stove advertising remain on the wall, but its use is unknown. It was extended almost as far east as the eastern end of building C, the foundry building. Construction was functionally and esthetically the same as the original part of building B. Two heavy metal sliding doors on each floor provide fire protection along with brick demising walls between sections of the building. Most of these doors remain. The south east corner of the building has a raised basement since the floor level on the eastern extension is level with that in the original building, but the site slopes downhill gently



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Section   7        Page   4**

eastward.

A building between building B and the subsequent site for building A was constructed during the initial construction campaign of the early 1900's. This building was demolished in 1994. It housed nickel plating and machine rooms and was a one-story brick building. Owners between 1920 and 1994, Universal Leaf Tobacco Company, neglected the building and it had structurally deteriorated beyond repair.

As built in 1902, the foundry building (building C) was typical construction for such use. Other foundry buildings for Southern Stove Works in its prior location at the corner of S. 14th St. and Cary St. looked very similar<sup>5</sup>: of all brick construction, with regularly spaced and relatively large windows, and sections of light monitor on the pitched roof apex for allowing natural light for the workers. Windows were set off in a recessed bay, two brick thicknesses behind the building face. The top of the recessed bay has a head course which steps in four courses forming a reveal accentuated by shadows from natural light. All windows have a triple course arched brick lintel and board-formed concrete sill. Windows have all been replaced with tall three light aluminum windows. As there is no second or third floor in the majority of the building, the stepped windows help shed light on the factory floor.

The south façade of building C can be observed only close up as there is only an eight foot distance separating building B from building C. At the upper border of the relief panels, three courses of brickwork step back to add depth to the otherwise flat face of the building. The recessed panels give the appearance of a brick pilaster between panels. This is a good example of architectural detail in the Southern Stove Works complex that is somewhat more refined than in many industrial buildings of that type and period.

On the east end, the balance inherent in the stepped-up pediment visually supported by the vertical brick work formed by the recessed brick panels here forms a complete and finished end to the building. The south-most panel and two of the windows originally found there have been cut out and a large metal delivery type door installed at a loading dock there. Existing in the shadow of the massive water tank which towers overhead, this façade nonetheless retains a passive serenity.

The west wall of building C rises in a series of recessed brick panels to a center pedimented parapet seemingly three stories tall. Its height is enhanced by the light monitor on the roof ridge. The recessed panels leave the intentional impression of square engaged brick pilasters rising to support the angled pediment. The bricks on the upper portion of the west wall are darker, probably having been exposed to more soot over time. Remnants of steel structural elements suggest that an overhang may have protected bricks lower down on the wall. Since the industry was coal fired, great volumes of soot and sulfuric acid belched from the cupolas daily, no doubt contributing to the darkening of the brick in the complex.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Section** 7 **Page** 5

The north façade of building C is unquestionably the grandest and longest in the complex. The recessed brick panel design motif of one-story façades works best in this case, providing a pleasing rhythm with light playing over the recesses and reveals of the lengthy façade. The tall windows of each panel are proportionally comfortable within the scale. The exposed board-formed foundation provides a strong visual band upon which the mass of the building rests comfortably. A large Southern Stove Works sign was painted on the north face of the foundry building for southbound travelers on Hermitage Road or rail line passengers to see as they passed by.

The interior of building C, the foundry building, has striking structural support. A filigree of lattice work supports the heavy concrete roof, with crossed steel trusses running perpendicular to the long axis of the building. Virtually all of this structure remains. Remnants of the cupola and furnaces are no longer visible inside. The concrete roof structure, now covered in asphalt shingle, no doubt was constructed for its fire resistance. The western addition to the foundry building, however, had a wood plank roof over the steel structure. Wire glass skylights are original to the roof structure; they are board-formed in the poured concrete roof structure.

Between 1905 and 1920, the foundry building was extended to the west. The new addition was very similar to the old building, except that the roof was wood plank on steel frame, rather than concrete on steel as in the eastern half. The brick pattern and window pattern were similar between the two halves of the building. On the east end of building C, a large water tower was constructed sometime between 1921 and 1950, according to the Sanborn maps. The water tower is the tallest structure on the site and is imposing on the east end of the property. Painted silver, it is currently adorned with the logo of the last industrial tenant of the building, Virginia Binding Corporation, across the whole of the water tower. While no longer used for water storage, the central large diameter pipe remains in good condition. Thin diagonal bracing supports the four legs of the tower, atop which is a cylindrical water tank with conical cap. It is a contributing structure.

The original use of building D is unclear. The smallest of the extant structures, it is also the least interesting architecturally. The east and west façades are masonry in seven course American Bond, with a single window opening, boarded up, on the west end and a double door on the east end. The north and south walls are windowless yet undulate with recessed brick panels suggesting the form of a colonnade. The roof slopes down to the south; it currently has some kind of spray on polymer coating.

In 1920, Southern Stove Works vacated the buildings, moving to larger premises. They acquired the operations of Richmond Stove Works, their principal competitor in stove manufacture in Richmond. By 1921, the J. P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Company had acquired the buildings and moved tobacco operations into the buildings. The 1921 Sanborn Map indicates that the facility was initially used by J.P. Taylor for storage of tobacco in hogsheads. Building C contained two tobacco leaf dryers. At some point, hogsheads were manufactured on the site, but the start date of manufacture is unknown. Bricks on the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section**   7   **Page**   6  

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

south side of building B are deeply scarred from battering by transport of large hogsheads along the south wall of the building. By 1925, J.P. Taylor had built another building north of building C; the concrete pad for this building is all that remains. It was a metal building with sloped vented metal awnings typical of leaf tobacco curing houses, and was used for drying leaf tobacco. This building had no architectural interest, and was demolished in 1994.

In the years from 1921 to 1985, Sanborn maps reveal no significant changes to the site. The building between buildings A and B, and the metal building north of building C were demolished in 1994 when Virginia Binding Corporation moved their industrial facility into building C and their offices into the west end of building B. Until the purchase of the property in 1994, Universal Leaf Tobacco Company (successor to J.P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Company) continued to store hogsheads at the facility. The remainder of buildings B and A were used as warehouse space, as they continue to be.

The west end of building B was finished as offices, and remains so today. It has typical architectural detail of the 1920s in its two and three component baseboard and door trim molding. While some door frames have been replaced over the years, a number remain. Pine plank flooring has been refinished for the first and second floors of this office section.

In summary, this complex of buildings in close proximity demonstrates typical purpose built architecture of the industrial vernacular of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The original function is elaborated through the structure. Architectural detail such as the recessed brick panels and detailed windows and light monitors demonstrate higher level architectural detail than strictly utilitarian buildings would include. While none of the original machinery, cupola or ovens used in the heavy industry that occupied these buildings in their early years remain, the exterior and interior structure and architecture remains almost completely intact. The history of construction on the site shows expansion of the complex in the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, commensurate with the growth of the stove-making industry at the time.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section**   8   **Page**   7  

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

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**Statement of Significance**

The Southern Stove Works complex was built for new occupancy in 1902. It meets National Register Criterion A due to its importance to local industry, and Criterion C for architectural significance. The complex of buildings is a good example of industrial purpose built architecture, with some elaboration above and beyond the strictly utilitarian. The complex retains sufficient architectural integrity to this day to convey its historic function as built. In 1902 the Southern Stove Works moved into the buildings, manufacturing and storing their complete line of stoves here. Southern Stove Works was one of the two largest stove manufacturers in Richmond, and Richmond was one of the most important stove making centers in the South for both cast and sheet metal products. The earlier Southern Stove Works foundry at 14th and Cary has been completely demolished, as have the office and warehouse buildings adjacent. The Hermitage and Leigh site is therefore the only remaining architectural legacy of the company.

Southern Stove Works grew, expanding its' facility here by doubling the size of the foundry building and increasing warehouse storage space. They acquired their local competitor, Richmond Stove Company, in the late 1920s, then vacating the premises, moving to newer purpose built facilities at 6th St. and Morgan in Richmond. By the mid 1920's, the entire area north of the site was occupied by stockyards and packing houses. For meat processing, as for stove manufacture, proximity to the railroad lines was important.

In 1920-1921, J.P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Company purchased and moved into the premises, utilizing it as a manufacturing facility for tobacco hogsheads and tobacco storage, part of a far flung empire of tobacco trading. Between 1921 and 1950, J.P. Taylor added two additional buildings on the premises, used as tobacco storage warehouses, which have since been demolished. After 1918, J.P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Company became a subsidiary of Universal Leaf Tobacco Company, a holding company formed by Taylor and former barons of the American Tobacco Company which was broken up in 1911 by the United States Supreme Court under the Sherman Antitrust Act. Universal Leaf Tobacco Company remains in business in Richmond today.

**Historical Background**

The property was part of Henrico County until the annexation of 1914 when it became part of the City of Richmond. In the early 20th century, nearby land uses included the Rosenegk Brewery on Hermitage Road (later the Todd Ham Building, recently renovated), and businesses that supported meat packing which soon moved into the area, such as ice manufacturers, spice manufacturers, bottle makers and meat packing itself. Most businesses in this area dealt with bulk goods and proximity to rail lines was important. This was especially true of the Southern Stove Works, and two railroad spurs from the R.F. & P. Railroad Lines coursed through the property. One ended just south of building B, and the other

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section   8        Page   8**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

continued west across Hermitage Road. Neither spur survives today, though they came off the R.F. & P line (now the CSX line) that borders the property on the north.

**Southern Stove Works**

The Southern Stove Company was established in Richmond in 1880 by William J. Loth. Initially sited at 1422 and 1424 E. Cary St. in Richmond, the company advertised as "Manufacturers of Stoves, Fronts, Grates, Fenders and Fine Castings Generally." By 1889, Mr. C.H. Fleming had become the President, Mr. W. Loth the general manager. Mr. Fleming was formerly with the Old Dominion Iron and Nail Works, another large foundry enterprise in Richmond, and was also one of the members of the firm of Loth and Fleming, another foundry. Mr. Fleming, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, had an established business reputation. Mr. Loth, also of Loth and Fleming, was no longer general manager by 1893. While the works were still at 1422 and 1424 E. Cary St., the business was growing and had expanded to additional works premises on S. 15th St. with offices adjacent. Mr. A.L. Ellett was installed as Secretary and Treasurer in 1893. Formerly with A.L. Ellett & Co., a dry goods concern, Mr. Ellett had also been collector of internal revenue for the Eastern District of Virginia. At this time, the Southern Stove Works Company was "a corporation with \$53,500 in paid up stock, and \$150,000 annual business, [occupying] works covering a square's front on Cary street, between Twenty-first and Twenty-second. In these works a hundred hands find employment. These men are engaged chiefly in the manufacture of stoves, fronts, grates, fenders, hollow-ware, cast iron furniture, and, incidentally, in foundry work of every sort....About 3,000 tons of material are utilized yearly... This is one of the most flourishing manufacturing establishments of the city. It has an enterprising and progressive management, and its trade steadily increases.." <sup>6</sup> While more complete sales figures from this era are unavailable, advertising in the Richmond City Directories from 1882 until 1931 suggested a growing industrial and sales concern with intermittent but generally progressively more elaborate advertising.

By 1897, though stoves were clearly still the principal mode of heating, business had taken a downturn. The company which just 4 years earlier had been described as headed by a progressive management, found itself "in liquidation." Apparently purchased by Mr. David Connell, listed as the new proprietor in 1898, Mr. C.H. Fleming was still associated with the company as Manager as they moved to new premises at 815-827 N. 17th St. The sales organization was unusual for the times as the "new" Southern Stove Works advertised directly to the public, with "no Agents or traveling men. Sell directly to the Consumer at factory prices....Terms strictly cash." <sup>7</sup>

Given new found prosperity and growth, Southern Stove Works moved to its new site at Leigh St. and Hermitage Road in 1902. At this time, Richmond was "one of the most important stove making centers in the southern country both for cast and sheet wares, and this importance has been augmented to a considerable degree in the past year by a new plant put up by one of the two principal firms established

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section   8        Page   9**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

here.”<sup>8</sup> The new Southern Stove Works was described as “the best equipped stove-making establishment in the South. Its machinery is of the finest sort. A Brooklyn firm of reputation for its dies furnished much of it.” In the late 19th century most of the stove output of the two large companies in Richmond, Richmond Stove Company and Southern Stove Works, was sold in the South. However in the early 20th century, sales expanded considerably in the North. The quality of stoves manufactured in the South was deemed better than the typical oil stoves sold in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington. “In fact much of the business comes to the manufacturers unsolicited, the quality and finish of the Richmond stoves being so well known and appreciated.” Total output of stoves manufactured in Richmond was estimated at about \$500,000 per year in 1902.<sup>9</sup> Lower freight rates also gave Richmond somewhat of a competitive advantage.

This site at Hermitage and Leigh was conveniently located directly on an R. F. & P. railroad line, with railroad sidings immediately adjacent to the warehouse. The foundry was of typical construction for foundries of the time, with a light monitor at the roof ridge, with cupola and smoke stacks in the center of the building, very similar to the foundry building at the Cary Street works that had been vacated. Light monitors allowed natural light to bathe the industrial floor, providing illumination for the workers. Proximity to the railroad line was crucial for this manufacturer of heavy iron products. Two relatively small outbuildings, the carriage shop and the coke bin, were extant by 1905 but were demolished by 1921. Other buildings included one south of the rail lines where Japanning ovens treated the metal for finishing, the original foundry building with corrugated iron roof on concrete over steel trusses, a 3 story storage warehouse, and a connected building for cleaning and mounting sheet iron. These buildings remain today. Another building consisting of a nickel plating room and machine rooms has since been demolished.

From 1905 to 1920, Southern Stove Works continued to prosper. The foundry building was extended westward, doubling in size. The extension was similar in construction to the original half of the building, with the exception that the roof structure was wood over steel trusses rather than concrete. The east end of the warehouse building was extended, and the irregularly shaped building between the two railroad spurs was built. A small building was also constructed on the north west corner of the property. The use of this building is unclear. By 1902 Thomas Atkinson had taken over the reins, and Stanhope Bolling had joined the management team by 1904. Growth continued and in 1920 Southern Stove Works moved out of the property into new premises at 6th St. and Morgan. In the late 1920's Southern Stove Works absorbed the business and operations of the Richmond Stove Company, and continued doing business until reorganization in 1950 as the Southern Steel and Stove Company. By this time stove making had ceased to be as important as alternate sources of heating and cooking had gained prominence. The company attempted to diversify its manufacturing processes to deal with this decline.

Shortly after Southern Stove Works departed the premises, another bastion of local business moved in. The J. P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Company took over the complex, using it until 1994.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Section   8   Page   10**

**J.P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Company**

Jaquelin P. Taylor was native to Orange County Virginia at his family's estate, Meadow Farm. Moving to Richmond at age 16 or 17, "Jack" learned the tobacco business from the ground up, starting his career in the menial tasks of labeling containers of tobacco. Three years later he moved to Danville, VA, a thriving tobacco marketplace. Ten large warehouses supplied tobacco for two simultaneous auctions. Here Taylor learned the trading of tobacco. Becoming a successful dealer in Danville, four years later he moved to Henderson, North Carolina. Over the next 10 years he built his business through acumen and entrepreneurship, establishing "the great leaf shipping and exporting establishment of J.P. Taylor & Company, one of the largest in the South."<sup>10,11</sup> His business model included pre-selling tobacco prior to warehouse purchase, as well as purchasing, warehousing and selling tobacco from stock. In 1912 Taylor moved back to Richmond. His family built a house at 2325 Monument Avenue, where his descendants still live today.

Richmond had been a center for direct sales by growers to manufacturers, and in manufacture of cigars, pipe and chewing tobacco. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Richmond was becoming home to more cigarette manufacturers, and also importantly to leaf dealers. These capitalists did not grow tobacco or manufacture tobacco products, but simply served as middlemen in an emerging tobacco trade. "Richmond was becoming a center for leaf dealers, and its advantages in transportation and finance, and its proximity to major markets, added to the city's appeal."<sup>12</sup> Taylor merged his North Carolina tobacco business with his new operations in Virginia, and set up an office at 803 ½ E. Main St. Taylor was president. He had extensive domestic and international business relationships in the tobacco trade. He became one of the most prosperous tobacco dealers in the country.

The American Tobacco Company was dissolved by the United States Supreme Court in 1911, and some of the holdings were combined with Taylor's enterprise as Universal Leaf Tobacco Company in 1918. J.P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco Company remained under the umbrella of the new Universal Leaf Tobacco Company. Taylor partnered with other barons of the tobacco trade, many of whom were leaders in their own right of components of the now split American Tobacco Company. Thomas B. Yuille had headed the tobacco purchasing division of American Tobacco Company in New York. After the breakup of American Tobacco Company, Yuille became vice president and director of J.P. Taylor in Virginia. Patrick Henry Gorman, like Taylor and Yuille, had risen from humble beginnings as a laborer in the tobacco business to become a director of American Tobacco Company and vice president of the American Cigar Company. He, too, joined Taylor in the founding of Universal Leaf. Universal then filled a new niche in the tobacco industry. It was a holding company with ownership in many subsidiary and partner companies (including J.P. Taylor), offering overall guidance to these subsidiaries. The business was to purchase the leaf directly from farmers, warehouse it and resell it profitably. Tobacco trade was thriving, and Taylor's consolidation enhanced buying power and thwarted competition. A second office was established in New York City but the Richmond office was maintained.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section   8        Page   11**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

As part of this far flung business empire, J.P. Taylor Leaf Tobacco company moved into the Hermitage and Leigh site in 1920-1921. The complex was used to manufacture hogsheads, fill them with tobacco and store them on site. These were the fundamental processes underlying the trading and financial operations of the company. By 1925 another building was constructed on the northernmost extent of the site. This building was of metal exterior and was demolished in 1994. With the exception of the construction of the present-day water tower on the east end of the site sometime between 1925 and 1950, the site remained largely unchanged. By 1985 the railroad line leading across the southern edge of the property and crossing Hermitage Road had been covered up.

J.P. Taylor died August 31, 1950, at age 89 in Richmond. Universal Leaf continues to trade in tobacco throughout the world, with headquarters in Richmond.

In 1994, the building was purchased for the Virginia Binding Corporation, a local bindery. That corporation ceased operations in November, 2004, and plans are underway to rehabilitate the complex into a multi-family residential community.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA

Section 7,8 Page 12

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Engelhardt, George W., ed. The City on the James: The Book of its Chamber of Commerce and Principal Business Interests. Richmond VA: George W. Engelhardt Publisher, 1902-1903.

<sup>2</sup> “Richmond Terminal Railway Company” Photograph Number 18 in Folio “Leigh Street” at Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia. August, 1928.

<sup>3</sup> “Southern Stove Works” Photograph of stove making operations, undated, probably early 20<sup>th</sup> Century in Folio “Southern Stove Works” at Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia.

<sup>4</sup> Conversation with Gary McDowell, former owner of the Southern Stove Works property, relaying conversations he had had in 1994 with officials of Universal Leaf Tobacco Company when they sold him the building.

<sup>5</sup> Morrison, Andrew, ed. The City on the James: Richmond, Virginia. The Chamber of Commerce Book. Richmond VA: George W. Engelhardt Publisher, 1893.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 830

<sup>8</sup> The City on the James: The Book of its Chamber of Commerce and Principal Business Interests. Op. cit., 1902-1903

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Duke, Maurice and Jordan, Daniel P. Tobacco Merchant: The Story of Universal Leaf Tobacco Company. Lexington, KY, University Press of Kentucky, 1995.

<sup>11</sup> Duke, Maurice and Jordan, Daniel P. “Jaquelin P. Taylor, Founder of Universal Leaf Tobacco Company.” Virginia Cavalcade Vol. 44, no. 3. (Winter 1995), 100-112.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section 10 Page 13

Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA

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Boundary

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 10 Page 14**

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Southern Stove Works property is the 6.37 acre irregularly shaped lot and improvements defined by the City of Richmond as Tax Map Number N0001100001.

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

Boundaries for the historic property known as the Southern Stove Works are based on the property description recorded as the City of Richmond Tax Map Number N0001100001, presently owned by Aneka Guna L.L.C. The property is defined by Leigh St on the southern edge, Hermitage Road on the western edge, the CSX Railroad bed on the northern edge and Middlesex St. on the eastern edge.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section** Photo List **Page** 15

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Photographic Index**

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Property: Southern Stove Works, 127-6145  
Location: 1215 Hermitage Road, Richmond, VA  
Photographer: Stephen Leibovic  
Date: November, 2004  
Negatives stored: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

- 1 of 14: Building A, South Elevation, Negative # 21975
- 2 of 14: Building A, East Elevation, Negative # 21975
- 3 of 14: Building A, west end, interior, Negative # 21976
- 4 of 14: Building B, East Elevation, Negative # 21976
- 5 of 14: Building B, West Elevation, Negative # 21976
- 6 of 14: Building B, west end renovated offices, first floor, Negative # 21976
- 7 of 14: Building B, interior second floor warehouse, Negative # 21976
- 8 of 14: Building B, existing elevator, Negative # 21976
- 9 of 14: Building C, North Elevation, west end, Negative # 21975
- 10 of 14: Building C, North Elevation, Negative # 21976
- 11 of 14: Building C, West Elevation, Negative # 21976
- 12 of 14: Building C, Interior, west end, wood roof, Negative # 21976
- 13 of 14: Building D, South Elevation, Negative # 21975
- 14 of 14: Water Tower, Negative # 21976

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section** Photo List **Page** 16

**Southern Stove Works  
Richmond, VA**

**Sketch Map**

